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LEBANON: Shia-Palestinian Clashes

Amal, the moderate Shia organization in Lebanon, attacked the Rashidiya Palestinian camp near Tyre for the ninth consecutive day yesterday, and fighting between Shias and Palestinians spread to the Palestinian camps in West Beirut. According to the press, Syrian observers arrived in Tyre earlier this week—along with Amal and pro-Syrian Palestinian officials—to implement a cease-fire. Both sides remain intransigent, however; the Syrians are urging Amal not to compromise, according to the local press. [REDACTED]

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Comment: Damascus is probably supporting the attacks by Amal in an effort to curb the strength and activities of pro-Arafat Palestinians in Lebanon. Syria may use the deteriorating security situation in Tyre to expand its small observer force in southern Lebanon and to move closer to the Israeli border. Amal is cooperating with Damascus because it fears that growing collaboration against Israeli forces in southern Lebanon by the Palestinians and Hizballah—the more radical, pro-Iranian Shias—will provoke additional Israeli retaliatory attacks. [REDACTED]

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ARGENTINA-PAKISTAN: Proposed Nuclear Cooperation

[REDACTED] a Pakistani delegation late last month proposed bilateral nuclear cooperation to officials of the Argentine Atomic Energy Commission. Under the proposal, Islamabad would provide Buenos Aires with plans for two nuclear fuel-reprocessing plants—a Belgian-designed laboratory-scale plant and a more advanced French-designed one. Argentina, in exchange, would train Pakistani technicians in its reprocessing methods. [REDACTED]

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Comment: Both countries stand to gain from such an arrangement. Pakistan has had problems completing its reprocessing facilities and may hope Argentina will share technology that other partners have not. Argentina may find access to other reprocessing methods attractive because it is currently negotiating nuclear export contracts that include reprocessing but has not yet mastered the technology. Buenos Aires probably prefers to keep any agreement informal to avoid jeopardizing nuclear exchanges with India and raising international concerns. [REDACTED]

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